



How does God guide us?

This is a question that came from one of our confirmation students. It also seems quite timely, since the theme of last Sunday's message was **"When you follow where God guides, He always provides."** Well, if God always provides when you follow His guiding, it IS really important to know where He's guiding.

God guides us in various ways, and the one place you can be sure that it's God guiding you (as opposed to your own desires directing you) is in His Word. We would all do well to think of the Bible as "God's Guidebook for Life."

Our problem is, we are tempted to think "I know most of what's in the Bible - well, at least the major stuff." So we feel like we don't really need to check with the Guidebook. That's a huge mistake! Just because we read it once - or at least some of it - in Confirmation class, doesn't mean we actually remember what's in it. Listen to the Apostle Peter:

*"So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have. I think it is right to refresh your memory..."* 2 Peter 1:12-13

There really is no substitute for refreshing your memory by reading a little bit of the Guidebook on a daily basis. The more you read it (or listen to it), the more you will instinctively know what God guides you to do - and not do!

I got a firsthand lesson in the importance of a guidebook when we went to Ireland. Last month's trip to Ireland was the second time we've been there. The first time I studied a detailed guidebook that gave me ideas about things to pack, things to leave home, things to do - and not do, things to see as well as many Irish differences to be aware of. I was constantly reading the guidebook in preparation for the trip - as well as on the trip. But this second time, I figured, "I don't need any guidebook to tell me about Ireland! I've been there once. I know all about it." Unfortunately, I didn't remember a tenth as much as I thought I would. It seemed like this time around I was in a constant state of "not knowing" what to do or where to go or how to get there. Guess what I did when we got home. I picked up the guidebook and read about all the things I did wrong. This trip would have been SOOOO much easier if I had just read the guidebook again - before going instead of after coming home!

There really is no substitute for being "into" God's Guidebook when trying to figure out where He's guiding you. The Guidebook will give you the general principles to consider when trying to figure out which path to take. But sometimes you will come upon two different paths that both follow God's principles. What do you do then?

Well, the Guidebook tells us:

*"If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you."* James 1:5

Want to know which way God is guiding you? Just ask Him! (In my experience you might also want to include a prayer for Him to open your eyes to see His answer, since we tend to look only for the answer we want.) And, when you get the sense that God is leading you in a certain direction, another good prayer to pray is this one:

*"I want to do Your will, Father. I'm going to head in this direction, so please put up a roadblock - so big that even I can't get around it - if this really is not where you want me to be going."*

God does use things that happen in our lives to guide us. He puts people and situations in our path to give us direction. He also "closes doors" and puts up roadblocks to indicate that it's time for a different direction.

Finally, God works through other Christians to point us in a certain direction. Don't be afraid to ask someone you know - someone who spends a lot of time in God's Guidebook - to tell you what they see in the situation that has you puzzled about which direction to head.

Hopefully, that helps you to discern the direction God is guiding.

Thanks for asking,  
Pastor David

**Send your questions to [pastor@livingwordlutheran.net](mailto:pastor@livingwordlutheran.net)**